

How Should I Promote My Book?

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*HONEST MEDICINE: Effective, Time-Tested, Inexpensive Treatments
for Life-Threatening Diseases*

This is the first in a series of three columns, written exclusively for ACAM members and followers by bestselling author and public relations consultant Julia Schopick. In these columns, Ms. Schopick will share her favorite online book promotional strategy designed to help authors and practitioners sell books and build their practices.

I can't count the numbers of times integrative practitioners—friends, clients and colleagues alike—have expressed shock that the books they've worked so hard to write haven't sold. They hoped the information in their books would help readers throughout the world. And yet, they've had very few sales, and therefore, their books have made little, if any, impact on the very people they wanted to help.

In talking with these practitioners, I've quickly learned that they believe in the myth of “the field of dreams”: “Write it and they will come.” But that's just not how things work in the world of book sales.

It's true—if you have an important message you want to get out into the world, writing a book is an excellent way to do that. But that's just the beginning. To get your book out to a greater audience so you can make more sales and grow your practice, you must know how to publicize the message of your book.

You do that by sharing your expertise with your book's potential buyers—your target market.

Today, the best way to do this is online.

One of the very best online ways for integrative practitioners to publicize their books is among the least utilized: leaving comments on relevant and appropriate blog posts. This is also the very method that I believe has made my book, *HONEST MEDICINE*, an Amazon.com bestseller, and this method can do the same for you. I'll show you how to use this tool in this three-part series for ACAM. I invite you to share your promotional efforts with me so I can help you gain confidence and fine tune your comments so that you can help more people.

Most authors know that they must have a website to promote their books; some even know that they should post articles on their sites. But beyond that, they still believe the “field of dreams” motto will hold true, and that people will just naturally come to their websites, read their articles and buy their books.

Unfortunately, people will *not* automatically come to your website or buy your books without some serious promotional efforts on your part.

It’s not enough to just write comments on relevant blog posts. You need to write your comments in a way that will educate your audience, catch people’s attention, start conversations and—ultimately—sell your books.

In upcoming columns, I’ll teach you how to write your comments in this way. I’ll also provide you with actual examples of effective comments.

This method is a low-to-no-cost publicity tool and completely in your control. It just requires you to communicate your message clearly and in a compelling manner to your audience via social media.

Before we get to all that, I'd like to share with you the reasons *why* you should listen to what I have to say. First, I have been a public relations (PR) professional for over 25 years, and many of my clients have been integrative health practitioners. So I know very well what works and what doesn't work for my clients.

Second, my book, *HONEST MEDICINE: Effective, Time-Tested, Inexpensive Treatments for Life-Threatening Diseases*, has been an Amazon.com bestseller for over two years, in great part because of the comments I have left in some very high-profile (and some not-so-high-profile) blogs and online publications. (I like to think that a big part of the reason my book has sold so well is that the information in it resonates with so many people!)

My online promotion method will work, whether your book was independently published or published by a big publisher. My goal with this series of columns will be to help you promote

your book and become known as an expert to a wide audience of people who will want to buy your book. And I believe they will want to buy it—if you use this promotional method effectively.

If you're not yet an author—or even if you don't plan to become one in the foreseeable future—these tips can also help you increase your visibility, so that you can have the robust and healthy practice you would like to have. An added bonus: If and when you decide to write a book, you will have a built-in online audience eager to buy it.

Let's begin with one foundational element of marketing: **getting known on other people's turf.**

Why Do You Need to Interact with Other People's Publications (Online Newspapers, Websites and Blogs)?

One of the most important things I've been teaching my professional PR clients all these years is that it is important to get known on other people's turf. In the “old days,” before the rise of the Internet, many of my clients believed that, in order to get the word out about their businesses and private practices, they needed to hold their own events and workshops. I quickly taught them that it was far better to be invited to someone else's event, to speak on someone else's “stage.” Why? For one thing, it's a lot easier! You don't have to book the room, pay all the expenses, do all the event promotion, and fill the room with people. But, even more important, as an invited guest, you're speaking to a built-in audience the organization or host has already cultivated. The benefit to the group is that the host or organization is getting a recognized expert—you—to provide interesting and relevant information to their attendees. In short, by being endorsed by another leader, you are more credible when you are speaking on someone else's turf.

Getting in front of other people's audiences also holds true in the world of Internet marketing. This means getting invited to write articles for online newsletters, blogs and websites where your potential readers—your target market—read and visit. Then you can link to these articles when you write your blog comments. You will find online publications, including blogs, where you will want to leave comments—publications and blogs members of your target market

read. In other words, you want to be visible as an expert in the online places where members of your target market go to get information.

Here are three simple steps you can start with today to get noticed on other people's turf:

1. First, make a list of 10-20 relevant online publications and blogs where you can leave comments or submit articles. I'll leave it up to you to determine which sites are relevant to you. After you decide what sites are relevant, you need to find them. Google has three options that are ideal: first, a section for "news" (<http://news.google.com/>) Second, and even more fruitful is a special search engine for blogs (<http://www.google.com/blogsearch?hl=en>). Just type your term in the search bar, using quotation marks if your term contains more than one word. For example, when I type in the name of one of the treatments I feature in my book, *Honest Medicine*, "Low Dose Naltrexone," I get over 22,700 hits. This does not mean that there are 22,700 blogs totally devoted to Low Dose Naltrexone, or LDN. It means that 22,700 blogs are discussing LDN and may be places for leaving comments later on. Similarly, if you are a doctor who specializes in using chelation therapy for heart disease, try typing "chelation" in the search bar. When I did it today, I found over 120,000 blogs that were discussing this topic! By searching in this way, you'll be getting an initial sense of which blogs may provide the best opportunities for commenting.
2. Second, sign up for Google Alerts (<http://www.google.com/alerts>). Then input each search term relevant to you one at a time. These alerts will provide you with daily emails with links to postings and articles on the topics you specify—topics you are an expert on and would therefore like to comment on. For example, I have signed up to get Google Alerts for "Low Dose Naltrexone," "the Ketogenic Diet," "Multiple Sclerosis," "Crohn's Disease," "autoimmune disease," "fibromyalgia," and "rheumatoid arthritis," to name just a few of my Google Alert terms. Each of these terms has particular applicability to *Honest Medicine*, so many of these news stories and blog entries provide me with opportunities for leaving comments. For example, you may want to sign up for Google Alerts for "chelation therapy," "heart disease," and any other terms that cover your areas of expertise.

3. Third, start going through the blogs and online publications you have found in your above searches. Get the “lay of the land” by reading the postings they contain to see which ones you’d like to comment on. But don’t leave any comments yet. I recommend that you wait until I teach you how to write effective comments that will get you known as an expert—and sell your book(s)—without appearing to be self-promotional. (Whereas blatant self-promotion is acceptable in some online venues, it is the “kiss of death” in this kind of online marketing. So tread softly and subtly.)

If you follow these steps, you’ll be off to a great start. I’d really like to know how your research goes, so please write to me with your feedback and questions at Julia@HonestMedicine.com.

Next week, I will teach you—by example—how to actually write your blog comments, and I’ll offer to help you in the writing process. So please stay tuned. I look forward to hearing from you—and to helping you become an expert in writing blog comments to market you, your book and your practice.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: PR professional, bestselling author and patient advocate Julia Schopick runs the popular resource site, HonestMedicine.com. Her book, *HONEST MEDICINE: Effective, Time-Tested, Inexpensive Treatments for Life-Threatening Diseases*, has remained an Amazon.com bestseller since its publication in 2011, thanks in great part to the promotional strategy she describes in this series of columns for ACAM. Contact her with your book marketing questions at Julia@HonestMedicine.com. To buy her book, go to [here](#).